1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

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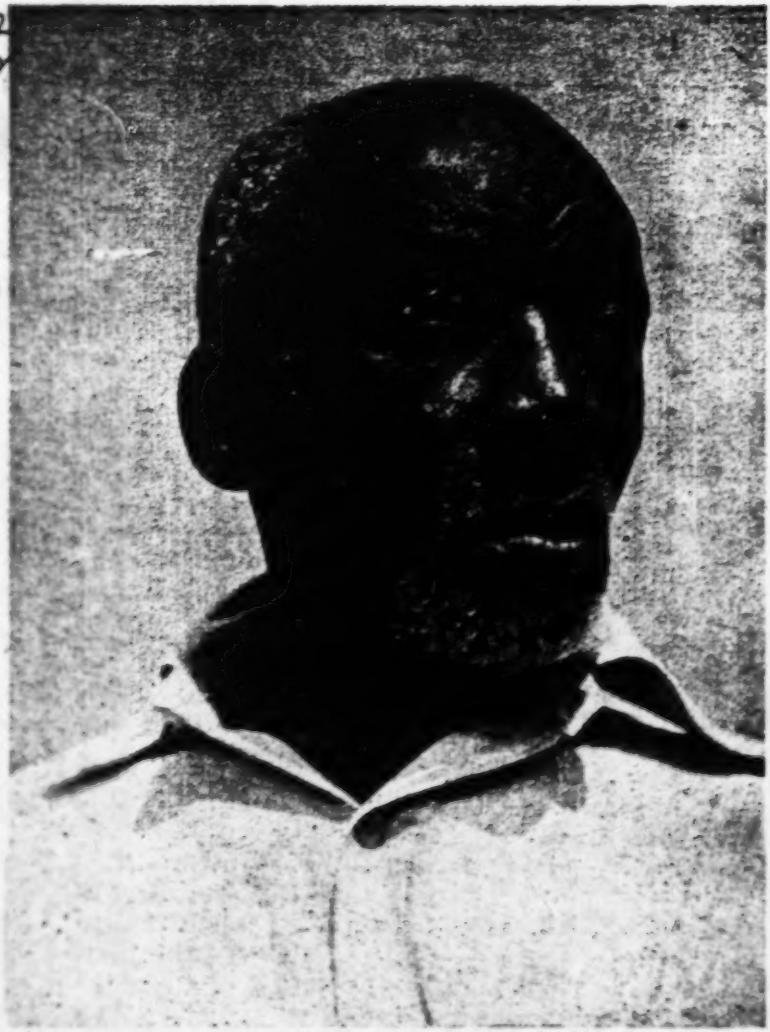

VI. FIBOMBE, A CHRISTIAN ELDER

[facing p. 51]

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

dead man'. Sometimes, immediately after the burial, the chief mourners, both men and women, wail outside near the newly-filled grave. 764

Very many of the women relatives, a few of the men relatives, and some of the neighbours smear their heads and faces with mud or pot-black as a sign of grief (*kyo kesa*). Such an expression of grief is thought extravagant by the Christians who have themselves abandoned the custom. One Christian explained: 'The pagans smear themselves with mud because they tremble with fear at a death—but we do not tremble; the pagans are very sorrowful because they say: "Our friend has vanished from our eyes and we shall never meet him happily again." ' 764 177

It is also the custom for the women relatives to bind one another's bellies with strips of bark-cloth, and for their woman friends to bind them also. These bark-cloth belts are called *amakiba* and symbolize the fearful grief and mutual sympathy of the mourners, and the sympathy of their friends. One women, who was taking two belts to tie up the bellies of two mourning friends whose husband had died, explained: 'I give them these to tie round their bellies because they are all a-tremble, they are full of fear.' And when she was asked why men did not thus support one another, she replied: 'They are not afraid like women, they do not tremble much.' But there is evidence that, before the coming of the Europeans, men also wore *amakiba* 'and even now if a chief dies his men often wear *amakiba* for one day'. The Christian women have kept the custom, but they emphasize more the aspect of sympathy and less that of fear. 'If a woman wears many belts at a burial that means she has many friends; her passionate grief is comforted by their friendship.' 292 764 [177] [572]

Sometimes on the first day, and usually on the last two or three days of a burial, there is dancing as well as wailing. Dancing begins late in the morning to the accompaniment of three or four drums, in the swept courtyard of the dead man's homestead; gradually it attracts more and more dancers, more and more of the attention of the onlookers, until the wailing is confined to the chief women mourners inside the hut, and the dance is the most conspicuous part of the proceedings. It is led by young men dressed in a special costume of ankle-bells and cloth skirts and, traditionally, bedaubed with red and white clay. All hold spears and leap wildly about, stamping down the soft earth of the grave as they dance. There is little common movement, each dances 535 764 [292] [302]

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Selya, MuNgonde

but the salted is mixed in a ball with the millet porridge previously prepared, and plastered against the wall of the hut and on the hearthstones, whence the participants must bite it off. They compete for it, jostling one another. Sometimes the officiant also puts some watery porridge in a leaf of the bark-cloth tree and squeezes it into a basket. Again the participants fight to take a little each. 765

Some of the millet paste, previously prepared, is smeared on the head of each participant in the form of a cross, drawn from the forehead and the nape of the neck to the crown, and from each ear to the crown. The officiant then shaves each of them, beginning with the lines along which she smeared them. As she does so she says: 'Alas, he (or she, if the deceased was a woman) stole. . . . They cut his head.'

If the family is wealthy at least one cow is killed by the heir—Kasitile insisted that a sacrifice is essential at the pumpkin-seed ritual—and the authority of the heir is acknowledged at the same time. Lubalelo, discussing the funeral of his kinsman Mwafyuma, remarked that, at the ritual of the pumpkin-seeds, when they had called together all the dead man's children, his son would kill cows. 'Then when he has killed the cows the children will be told "He is your father", and all of them will fall down before him clapping their hands to say: "Thanks be! Father has risen from the dead (*Ndaga! Ndaga! Asyukile tata*)." '

ii. '*Shaving the sprouting hair.*' The remaining millet brought by relatives and neighbours is usually put to soak immediately and, when it has sprouted, the wives of relatives and village neighbours are called to come and help grind it for beer. The women of the village bring firewood to boil water for the beer and, when the brewing is ripe, 'those whose wives came to grind' come to drink. The participants are given some of the beer mixed with *ikipiki* and a powdered medicine in a small calabash at the grave. Then the officiant smears their faces with soot and draws lines on the head of each with a piece of banana stalk dipped in the lees of the beer to which the *ikipiki* and powdered medicine have been added. Again the lines are drawn from forehead and nape of neck to the crown and from each ear to the crown. She shaves the sprouting [302] hair on the forehead and at the nape of the neck of each of them, and also makes some small cuts in these places and rubs in the lees of the beer. Or she may do this for the senior participant only, who then does it for his juniors. This is 'the shaving of the sprouting hair' (*ukutemula ilitemulo*) and implies the lifting of a ban. If the

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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at the groom's home (*ukusukusula*). The party was given a hen when they arrived and a second the next morning. The groom and some of his friends spent the night with the bride and her friends. (He and she lie together on this occasion but do not yet have full intercourse.)[1] In the morning the mother-in-law shaved the bride's head, eyebrows, and eyelashes, leaving only a small tuft on the nape of her neck. Then she mixed water with powdered medicine and poured it for groom and bride to wash. The groom washed his hands and mouth only, the bride her hands and mouth and whole body. During her seclusion she might not use oil or the red powder favoured as a cosmetic by Nyakyusa women,[2] but after this third washing she was free to do so, and she oiled herself meticulously. Meantime the groom was shaved by one of his friends.

On the same day the bride returned to her father's homestead with her own party and seven 'mothers' of the groom who brought five stems of bananas, a pot of water, and a small bull for the ritual of 'clearing out the litter' (*ukusosya ulufumbo*). She herself was wearing the skin of a bull over her head—'she wears any skin she can get hold of'. One of the groom's party shaved off the last tuft of her hair and buried it carefully in the *ulufumbo*, the litter of banana leaves on which she had slept and sat during her seclusion. Had her own mother been present she would have shaved also and so should the brother, but he did not do so. The groom's mother and Kyobwe (representing the bride's mother) carried out the litter to the edge of the banana plantation surrounding the homestead. As they did so they whispered to each other. Kyobwe said the bride was a little liar. Her husband had offered her 1s. to take to her mothers and she had refused it saying: 'No, they swear at me and grudge me food.' 'She's your child,' said the mother-in-law. 'No,' said Kyobwe, 'she's another woman's child, she's a foolish child.' Every scrap of litter in the hut was carefully collected and a little of the soil below it scraped off and carried out with the leaves. All who had helped with the clearing washed their hands carefully.

Then the groom's mother made a basin of two banana leaves close to the pile of litter. Into it she poured the water her party had brought with them, and sprinkled in powdered medicine in

[1] One or two informants maintained that 'she must not refuse him now or he will refuse to wash with her, saying: "She is not my wife."' But others were insistent that according to strict custom only *intercourse inter crura* was allowed. Full intercourse at this time would make nonsense of the *ilibalapa* ritual which follows.

[2] Formerly also by men: cf. V. Giraud, *Les Lacs de l'Afrique Equatoriale* (1890), p. 176.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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Sobya, Malgonde

them and polite greetings were exchanged. The bride herself crouched down with her head covered with a cloth, but after the greetings were completed she sat up and chatted with them. Then one of the groom's 'village mothers', who was the officiant in the ritual, his sister, and two young women from his village, took the bride to the stream to wash. The officiant told the young women to carry her, which they did for a few yards, then they put her down. Her maids sang and she herself danced a few steps. Women came out of the houses as we passed, dancing and clapping. At the stream the bride took off her old bark-cloth and bathed with her maids. As she finished she stepped into a flat winnowing basket (*ulusolo*) for a minute, then stepped out, and her husband's sister decked her with four brass body-rings (*side* plate 7) and a folded cloth (*umpepe*) hanging down from the rings behind like a tail. The bride shook the 'tail' and the others laughed and cried: '*Kipetule*[1] *tukunsepeka*[2] (It is turned over! We clothe her with the male genital covering!)' They walked back again laughing, and when they reached the first houses one of the party said: 'We should carry her now.' Another demurred: 'Let's go a little further, she's heavy.' Then a woman of the village came along and called: 'Carry her! Carry her!' They arrived at her mother's house singing: '*Niya, Niya, Niya*! (Put me down!)' The groom's 'mothers', the bride herself, and her maids, all sang this. The rest of the groom's party joined in and they walked up and down the courtyard carrying her and singing '*Niya, Niya*.' The groom's own mother carried a winnowing basket on her head and the bride's 'mothers' rushed out and threw into it small bowlfuls of millet, maize, pumpkin-seeds and lentils.[3] This grain goes to the groom's 'mothers': 'The mother-in-law drinks beer made from the millet.' Then the bride was made to sit down in the doorway of her mother's hut; the officiant sat behind her, shaved a little of the sprouting hair from the front of her head, and smeared her head, arms, legs, and stomach with ointment and red powder supplied by her own mother. Powdered medicine supplied by the groom's mother was added to the shaving water.

When her toilet was completed, the women called the men to come and give their gifts. The bride and her maids crouched down and the cloth removed from her buttocks was spread

[1] *Okupetula*: to turn over.
[2] *Okunsepeka*: to clothe, from *ikisepe*: male genital covering.
[3] Beans, cowpeas and ground-nuts are also mentioned as being given at this time.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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Selya, MuNgonde

little older than herself, rather than at the formal admonition by her mothers, though a little is given then also.[1] She is especially warned to depilate herself regularly. 'If she is hairy her husband will complain to the mothers and they will beat her.' The maids listen to the instruction along with the bride, and since every girl keeps several of her immediate seniors company before she grows up herself, no young woman can be left in doubt as to her duties as a wife.

At the shaving of the sprouting hair the 'bull of puberty' (*ingombala jabusungu*) should be killed if the bride is found, on examination by her mothers and those of the groom, to be a virgin, or if the husband has told the women that he himself has deflowered her. Mwasofu's complaint at the ceremony just described was that the groom's party had not brought the bull though his daughter was a virgin, and he insisted that the bride could not go to her husband until it had been provided.

At another puberty ritual which we attended, the bull was duly brought and, after examining the girl, the mothers announced her virginity with the cry of triumph (*akalulu*), and shouted: 'It is ours, it is ours.' They rushed through the courtyard dancing and applauding. Before the examination the bull had been tied up near the mothers, and immediately the joyful announcement was made it was killed. The meat of this bull is divided between the bride's mothers, her father's kinsmen with whom he exchanges cattle, and his immediate neighbours. The ritual portion, the *jisumaga*, cut from the top of the right foreleg, is taken by her father to his ritual grove of bananas and there he prays, saying: 'You, so-and-so (naming his father), since I have eaten the food of others (non-relatives) may she flourish at her husband's.' Another informant's version of the prayer was: 'I am eating the bull for my daughter, may she bear children!' A third said: 'Here is the meat! I have eaten the food of others, come out a little, may she bear a child at her husband's!'

If the bride is not a virgin the bull is not killed. It must be returned. Informants repeatedly implied, in talking of the ritual, that everyone knew beforehand whether the bride was virgin or not. 'If she is not a virgin we only do a little ritual, there is but one

[1] Our informants maintained that clay images were not used as a medium of instruction, as among the Bemba, though Nyakyusa girls would stylized dolls out of clay almost identical with one shown for the Kisi in F. Fülleborn, *Deutsch Ost-Afrika*, Band IX, *Atlas*, plate no. 98, 99, 97, 70.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

23 July 1935

iii. *The bringing out (ukusoya)*

Seventeen days after the induction the 'bringing out' took place.[1] The hut had been burnt last night and a new one built in a new place. Mwakobela was inside it and when we went to greet him he only put his head out, saying: 'I am not coming out.' The doctor had slept at the homestead and a small bull had been killed yesterday evening. Mwakobela had provided it because the sheep which Mwaiteteja (his brother) had got from the hills had died. Twenty-one men were present and there were two pots of beer, of which we were given one. Mwainumo (our clerk) left (as we had told him to do if he wished) and the men remarked: 'He is baptized, he only looks on, it's taboo for him to participate, it's taboo for him to drink the ritual beer.'

The meat was being cooked by Mwakobela's wives and the doctor was preparing the medicine. There were two lots of medicine: a fine powder (*imbondanya*) made of *kabombelo* and *ikipiki*, and a rough sort (*uskata*) made of *kajenja*[2] and *shangasi*. The doctor explained: 'The powder is used for smearing on the forehead to enable people to meet the parents of the twins; it is not very important, it prevents the belly swelling. It is also drunk in beer at midday, for the same purpose, by the parents of the twins, and then by all their relatives. The second medicine is used for splashing on the legs with hot water; it prevents the legs from swelling. If anyone does not come to-day and his legs or belly swell, he will come to me, the doctor, and I will put hot medicines on his legs and give him powder to drink in beer. I will not smear his forehead then, no. . . . The non-relatives have their legs splashed but do not anoint their faces or drink the medicated beer.' Mwanyoso remarked: 'Our wives often do not come. Then we take home a little of the lees of the beer for them to drink.' Thirty-six people who had not washed at the induction washed now.

From the time we arrived at 7.30 a.m. the women were busy shaving each other and all the small girls except one. She was not shaved for she was in mourning—her mother had died recently. After shaving, the women and girls washed and anointed and rouged themselves. The mother of the twins (Masobesi) was in the new hut with her surviving twin and her husband. All were

[1] It was delayed three days to oblige us, as we had another engagement.

[2] *Kajenja* gives a yellow dye used traditionally to decorate bark-cloth, and nowadays also used as a relish like curry, 'but this is a new Swahili custom'.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

845 freshly shaved and anointed; the mother and child were also
• 302 rouged, and both husband and wife had on new cloths. The women explained: 'The filth is finished now', and, in answer to a question about why they shaved, they replied: 'We throw away the hair in the long grass because it is filthy.' The little girls picked up scraps of hair carefully and disposed of it in the long grass. Mwaiteteja (brother of Mwakobela) said of the shaving:

> All the children, Mwakobela's and mine, boys and girls, and our wives, shave. I, Mwaiteteja, do not. Mwakobela shaved last night. At an ordinary birth only the mother shaves. Mwanyilu and other grandsons of Mwaipopo are 'just people' [i.e. not relatives for this purpose] and do not shave, but they are treated with the hot medicines.
>
> Mwanyoso: The anointing is part of the ritual. The shaving and anointing are to show that the ritual is over. Since the birth of the twins neither the women nor the children have shaved or anointed themselves, nor we men either, but we don't anoint ourselves very much anyway. We shall all shave to-day or to-morrow, but I have shaved already because of the funeral ritual of Mwakinini which took place two days ago.

845 Husband and wife in the hut spoke in whispers, and not even the doctor entered: 'They fear the legs.'

The doctor ranged everyone in a rough circle and she and her assistant went round smearing the forehead of each with the powder mixed with ointment. The circle soon broke up and people came up to her of their own accord to be smeared. She just dabbed a line on the forehead of each.

Then the banana suckers were cut and frayed at the end. A regular circle was formed. Mwakobela rushed out of the hut (washed, shaved and wearing a new cloth), seized two of the suckers and dipped them in the hot medicine, and splashed it on to the circle. The people yelled and ran away, only to return. He splashed them thus two or three times and then returned to the hut. The doctor continued the splashing.

Then Mwanyoso went up to the hut with a pruning hook and cut it open, crying: 'War has come!' Mwakobela and his wife and the child rushed out 'in the direction of Mwaijonga's place' [Mwakobela's father's home], followed by the whole crowd shouting: 'We are pure (*Tali bele*).' They ran thirty or forty yards only
[77] and came back laughing and talking. Mwakobela said: 'In the old days I'd have taken a spear and shield and danced, alone!'

Two banana leaves were spread on the ground and the doctor

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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Ndali

The officiant prepared some beer mixing it with powdered medicine, and they came one by one to drink. The other officiant made as if to shave them, taking a little hair from the forehead and the neck. When she had done this she put her hands between her legs. Thus the people of Selya perform the ritual. In another calabash they put the lees of the beer that had been drunk, with two pots of water. These lees are poured on to their heads and the water runs over their bodies. When the officiant has done this she puts her hands and the calabash between her legs. They look towards Sangu country. Then they shave their hair. When they have finished they throw away the cloths and bark-cloth which they wear when they wash. Then they anoint themselves with oil, and sleep with it on them, and wash in the morning. The people of Selya shave in the morning; at this time they do not really shave, they only cut the sprouting hair.

In the evening there is the ceremony of handing over the inheritance. The heir sits on a banana stump in the doorway and the chief wife hands him a billhook. Then they say: 'Care for these children whom your elder brother left as if you had begotten them yourself, do not be hard, be kindly as he was.'

And at night he will sleep with the widows. In the morning the chief wife goes to her father without washing off the filth and gives her fathers beer, then they greet one another. Ndingania also goes to his mother's people. They said one woman did not go because her fathers did not know the custom, they are Lugulu. There were only these two women, one grown up and one a girl, to be inherited.

Mwaijumba told me that for Kanyosa their affines will not cut the banana grove for they have no girl to give in her place. 'They will give us cattle, we divide (the marriage-cattle) with them.'

(*b*) *Ndali funeral rites* — *Record of Mwaikambo*

When someone has died the Ndali mourn for five days, and the sixth day they sweep and shave the hair. When they are shaving it they take a potsherd and put in it all the hair that is shaved off. When they have finished they choose one senior woman, the chief wife, and they hand her this hair and they go to throw it away at the cross-roads. Giving the woman the hair means that the shade should be at his place and leave others. Shaving is to get rid of the shade which was on their bodies (*akumwa ko kunonya amyuka aju kali nagwe mu mbili*). And the people who hold the corpse in their arms and dug the grave step over a trench of fire when they have come from the bathing. The doctor gives them medicines to bathe with. They say that if they do not step over fire it is as if they had the dead on their bodies (*kulinagwe mumbili amfwe*), and he will always come in dreams, so they drive him away.

When some considerable time has passed—a whole year—they do the *djengulo*. This word comes from straining beer. To strain the *djengulo*

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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764 and sniffed at the grave. When this son-in-law arrived, the chief women mourners got up from under the tree and went with him into the hut to wail. They came out all wailing. The women under the tree were wailing all the time with a leader standing up in the middle. But the wailing was drowned by the drums of which there were three sets.

764 Three young men were got up with white clay spots and some had
535 bells on their ankles and loin-cloths. They held spears, and danced and
602 leaped wildly. 'What', I asked Kasitile, 'is the meaning of the white clay?'

KASITILE: It is war paint. During war we painted ourselves with white clay formerly. Then if I saw one with white clay I did not spear him. It was my comrade. But he whom I saw without it was an enemy and I speared him. It was the sign.

725 QUESTION: But did the other side not use it?

KASITILE: We took them by surprise.

Mwanyoko came to visit me in the evening.

764 QUESTION: And what steps are they taking about Katuya's death
789 from sorcery?

MWANYOKO: They sought the doctor, Mwangukombe, for the burial yesterday. He pounded a medicine and burnt it on the grave. Then they buried the dead man and danced on the grave. That means they destroyed the sorcery. The dead man should take it away with him.

QUESTION: And has the doctor given them medicines to drink?

MWANYOKO: He has not yet done so. They will fetch him again to cook the medicine at the home.

QUESTION: What about the payment?

759 MWANYOKO: For yesterday they did not pay anything, now, but when they have fetched him to their home, then they will pay some shillings. But if many people have died, then they fetch a famous doctor such as Mwakisonde. Then he comes with all the protective medicines (*amapingo*) and treats them. Then such a doctor gets a cow. The famous doctors in this country are Mwakisonde and Kapugano and Mwakanyamale.

787 QUESTION: Will they consult an oracle?

MWANYOKO: Why should they consult an oracle? They know what it is. It is the sorcery of their brothers!

759 QUESTION: But it might be the sorcery of another. Some say of Mwalinjo (the chief).

MWANYOKO: They are liars. See, Katuya had just come from his brothers. He got the illness at their place. It is they. If it was from Mwalinjo and his people, they would have speared him by night. We would have found wounds and much blood, but we did not find them.

QUESTION: He came from his brothers?

MWANYOKO: Yes, there was a ritual because their father, Mwalikinja, had died. Their senior brother inherited and he also died. Katuya

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

301
•302
142

276

Tobacco Smoking.

A Young Woman.

[Facing p. 64]

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

Lepers are now buried like ordinary persons. But in the not very distant past, they were placed in a sitting position against a tree, and so left to be devoured. No one of those who carried the body looked behind, lest he also should be "caught" by the disease. 766

About a month after the funeral, the beer feast takes place. A small quantity is taken to the grave, and the dead man is addressed, and bidden again to go to his ancestors. "Take this beer as an offering to them. The ox that we have killed is also for them." The day is given up to eating and drinking, with intervals of wailing, the men in the open, the women in the house of the heir, or near relative of the dead man. 765

The ceremonies for women and children are similar to those described. A small chief, near Karonga, who was utterly neglectful of his mother during her life, impoverished himself in the splendour of her funeral. The grave was completely lined with expensive cloths, and the body was decked out as it never had been in life. The man's grief was genuine; or if it was not grief, it was fear of what the old lady, with her renewed powers, might do, if he did not attend to her now that she was dead. 764

When the mourning is over, all the friends of the dead man shave their heads. Omission of this ceremony involves the careless one in a quarrel with the departed. 765 302

Here and there throughout the country ancient customs survive which have been dropped by the majority of the people. In many places the entrance of the heir upon his new position is accompanied by 768

9: Wilson K-5 (1934-1955) 1959
F317 Ngonde F317
Nyakyusa

757 753 clearly inclined to the shades as it had before the divination, but as before the certain conviction was lacking.

Four days later (12/2/33) Kasitile went to Nzesa in Kitali village to consult the oracle again 'for that of Nzuki went wrong'. He told us afterwards 'This oracle supported the finding of Ndembwe's. It said: [775] [769] Your kinsman who is dead is angry; he says, "Why did you not celebrate the ritual? I am tired of the hair (*Ngatale nagu imuli*). And what did you offer your father after cutting that tree?" ' Here yet another cause of Kasitile's illness is suggested—the neglect of the death ritual of a kinsman. The implication is that the chief mourners have [765] not yet performed the concluding rite of shaving which makes it [802] possible for the deceased to join his fathers. The hair which the mourners shave off is called 'the hair of the corpse'.

QUESTION: What are you going to do then?

KASITILE: I shall charge the young man, son of my dead kinsman, with [691] [682] neglect, and tell him to celebrate the ritual that the shades which have bound me may go out of my body.

QUESTION: And the bull?

KASITILE: If I can find one I shall kill it.

QUESTION: Who will be there?

[793] KASITILE: The priests will be there, Ngulyo, Kimegete, Njobokwa, Mwalubata and Mwakasukule,[1] and also Mwaipopo (116) himself. Were I a commoner I should kill alone with my younger brothers, but since I am a public personage (*ali ulukumbe*) the village headmen are there. (To Mwakambo, the clerk.) It is good at your home in the hills; here things are bad.

QUESTION: But they also have shades?

[775] KASITILE: But they are not important. Look you, I just cut a tree and [778] they have seized me and dwell in my body. Are there sacred groves in the hills? Do men visit them? There in the hills rituals have died; the puberty ritual and the rituals of the groves are celebrated very little.

On 27th March Kasitile looked in to say that he was going to con- 787 sult a visiting Sanga doctor 'from very far off' about his cough, but 791 G.W. had better not come lest his presence spoil the divination. 753 Kasitile came again after the consultation, full of excitement. 'What a doctor! That is a doctor indeed! That is a diviner! He took an axe and divined with it; he took coppers which I brought and threw them in a little pot, together with the axe, and ash, and he said: "You also take ash and throw it in" and I did so. Then he looked into the little pot and said: "You built on the plain?" He knew this without being told! I said: "Yes".'

SIMON: There was a quarrel there.

[1] The last two are priests of Mbwanga (*vide* p. 84) who did not in fact cross Mwaipopo, Kasitile's antagonist, who did cross is not mentioned.

Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
F317 Ngonde F317
Nyakyusa

and achievement. An account of the treatment of a field for protection against wild pig emphasizes this.

If people wish to protect a crop from wild pig they go to a doctor to ask for medicine. When he gives it to them he tells them that there must be no quarrelling in the home after they have barricaded the field. Four women go to the field with the husband of the one who cultivates it. They go after sunset. One woman is shaved; her head is a symbol of the garden devastated by pig. A second woman, who keeps her hair, ties a head-pad on her head and carries bananas with medicine. She enters the field and eats the bananas. The husband climbs a hill at a little distance, and two of the women go into the long grass close to the field. The bald pate twists a head-pad and the one with hair smears it with medicine and as they do so they look towards their husband and abuse him saying, 'You lay with your mother', and he swears at them saying, 'The leather aprons of your fathers' . . . and many other insults. Then the women walk round the edge of the field, sprinkling medicines, and they go out the way they came in. The circular pad is a symbol of the barricade placed round the field. When they return home they do not eat but go to sleep hungry (though the shaver once eat beforehand). If they quarrel, the pig finishes the food. It is as if quarrelling destroyed the fierceness, the power, of the protective medicine; you must put aside all quarrelling that the medicine may be powerful. If the pigs come it is as if there were a quarrel, as the woman and her husband quarrel in the field mimicking the pig. The husband on the hill is like the pig approaching the field, his wives in the long grass also represent pigs. . . . The husband and his wives quarrel only in the field. If, when the maize is ripe, the husband loves one of his wives for any cause she does not go to pick the maize herself, a friend picks it for her. If she goes in her anger she finds the maize finished, nothing but earth is left.

Here the link between medicines and morality is made plain. Quarrelling weakens medicines of all sorts and renders them ineffective. But a mimic quarrel between husband and wives in the fields renders the medicine effective. It represents the battle between the pig and the medicines. There is a suggestion elsewhere (pp. 69, 113) that pigs are *sent* by the shades when kinsmen or neighbours quarrel, but in the account just quoted it is implied that quarrelling in the home directly injures the medicine.

In themselves, many medicines are neutral. They may be put to good or evil ends, but because they are mysterious and powerful, they are feared, in the same sort of way as cosmic energy is feared in contemporary society. Men use medicines themselves 'for purely peaceful purposes', but they are shocked at

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765 48 head of the line. She was also the first who crawled between the legs of the others, facing the hut, and followed by the others. This ceremony has the same purpose as the preceding act.

[241]

Scene from the ubunyago-ceremony: The mourners returning from the grave to the house crawling through the legs of the others.

765 Then the hair of the mourners was shaved (ukumosa nwili, to shave the hair, profane and ritual) and, I was told that a bath would be the last act ending mourning.

[241 516]

Scene from the ubunyago-ceremony: The shaving of the hair.

765 123 43 In the afternoon I sent the father of the dead child a cotton kerchief as a gift, and when I met him later on, he told me I had participated in the burial of his child by that gift, saying, "You have buried my child with me".

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[881] I went to the place and got permission to enter the hut in which the first part of the ceremony took place. I found there the parents of the girl, the girl sitting enveloped in clothes in one corner of the hut, and some older females, one of whom was the acting wasyapo. Some male guests were also present[29]. As the girl had had her first catamenia the present ceremony marked at the same time the end of her preparation for marriage.

[273 278] The wasyapo prepared a beverage of beer in which a light-brown medical powder (*imbondanga*) was put. First the girl had to drink from it, then the parents followed. This beverage was believed to strengthen (*ukusinya*) the consumers. Then a spear was handed to the girl by her father, and the girl handed it in turn to some relatives of the bridegroom waiting near the hut. These persons had to bring the spear to the girl's bridegroom as a sign that he could now marry the girl[30], but not before he had brought a bull to the girl's father. After this the girl, now sitting in the middle of the hut, was given small gifts from the participants in the ceremony.

[582 583]

[431]

[291 342 516 868 415]

Practical instruction of premature girls in house-hold matters.

[302] Following this the whole body of the girl was anointed before the door of the hut. The wasyapo began by anointing her legs; then the girl herself continued it. The ointment was prepared from castor oil

[279] and a powder of red wood (*Kipimbe*, found commonly in the environment of Lake Rukwa). At this moment a male participant in the ceremony chanced to, come out of the hut, and suddenly a young woman

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[29] Cf. Wilson, Introduction, p.258; The Study of African Society, p.11 (The Rhodes-Livingstone Paper No.3, 1939).

[30] ukwenga: to take (also as regards marrying); ubwegio: nuptials.

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sitting there on the yard got up, as quickly as possible held her hands before her eyes and rushed off. This was because this man was her father-in-law. The strict social tabu in such circumstances is well known[1].

The next act consisted in shaving the girl's hair on her temples by the *wanyago*; the father was shaved by a younger brother of his in the same manner. (I cannot remember whether it was also the case with the mother of the girl.)

The old fashioned hut of the chief's wife.

Then the further ceremony took place again inside the hut. All the participants sat down on mats, and the *wanyago* accepted the complaints of the parents on the former conduct of their daughter. Sometimes the discussion between these parties, where the *wanyago* played the role of a mediator as is the case with the *unjobi* (or speaker) in the court, reached such a pitch of excitement that I thought a serious quarrel had broken out. The excitement was, perhaps, only of a ceremonial character; I was told, however, that in former times corporeal punishment has been inflicted, if, indeed, the girl had shown misconduct in the times before.

Next, the girl was instructed by the *wanyago* in her duties as a wife. These instructions were of a theoretical or moral nature concerning the correct conduct of the girl towards her parents also after the ceremony and towards her future husband. The practical part of the initiation instructions sometimes comes before this ceremony at the end of initiation. These practical instructions cover the preparing of food

[1] Cf. Merensky, p. 125; Mackenzie, p. 108 (at Karonga?). According to Merensky the daughter-in-law has to observe this tabu also towards the brethren of her father-in-law. All these persons are named *ukwenene*.

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291 301 belts are also worn by men, nowadays below the other clothing. More and more pieces of cotton with imprinted patterns have come into 291 vogue. They are worn around the lower part of the body or below the 177 shoulders or fastened about one of them, and are bought from Indian [339] shops. That this modern fashion, however, is something new in such places which are a little remoter from direct European influence was demonstrated to me when I came through a small village in the environment of Masoko. There by chance I met some young girls carrying a piece of cloth on the top of a long pole as if it were a banner. On enquiry I was told that this "banner" was nothing other than a [556 piece of cloth newly bought by a woman of that village and that it was 482] hoisted on a pole and carried in procession out of sheer joy that this woman had been able to buy it.

291 Menfolk throughout are fuller dressed, especially when they go dancing. The women, on the other hand, wear their ordinary dress also on such occasions. The dancing costume of the men — only the younger [292 men participate in dancing — consists of a sort of tight-jacket or 535] sweater and wide robes with coloured patterns. The hair is adorned • [302 with feathers. At work the men mostly wear only loin cloths or shorts. 237] After work especially the older man wrap their bodies in blankets. It is very seldom nowadays to find even very old men still wearing the former national dress: a bundle of long grass in front and a smaller one behind tied to the waist by means of a string, as I found a man on a solitary spot near Rungwe Station. Little boys go altogether naked until they are about three years of age. Little girls begin to wear a small *mushi* at an earlier age.

531 *13. Art.* One of the most interesting and striking features in the artistic endowment of the Nyakyusa are the decorations on the outer-walls of their huts. The latter are only painted, however, when the exterior of the framework of bamboo is mud covered, otherwise only the wooden doors (*ibifiga*, door) of the huts are painted. By no means every hut or house is painted, but only a limited number in each village, probably depending on the presence and industry of an artist as this art is as in other cases an individualistic one. One such artist was introduced to me in a village near Rutenganio. The ornaments consist in most cases of geometrical patterns in white and black, seldom in other colours, or they represent different sorts of animals, e. g. elephants, horses, cattle, snakes, etc. The richest designs I found in a long extended village on the right bank of the upper Kiwira. In an other case the names of the animals were written in Swahili below